

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-21 that are pending in the above-identified patent application. Applicants have amended claims 1-7 and added new claims 8-21. No new matter has been added by these claim amendments.

In numbered part 1 of the Office Action, the Examiner objected to the title as not being descriptive. In response, Applicants have amended the title to read: METHODS AND APPARATUS FOR CAUSING A CHARACTER OBJECT TO OVERCOME AN OBSTACLE OBJECT. Applicants respectfully submit that this new title is fully descriptive of the invention as claimed. Accordingly, request that the Examiner withdraw the rejection.

In numbered paragraphs 2-3 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-4 and 6-7 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Publication No. 2002/0019257 ("the Koizumi reference"). In view of the amendments hereinabove, Applicants respectfully traverse the Examiner's rejection.

The present invention as recited in independent claims 1, 6, and 7 permits user-initiated actuation of an operating device that has a plurality of operating portions. The resultant output from the user-operated device is operable to cause automatic actions by a character object to actively overcome at least one type of obstacle object on the display screen. In this regard, claim 1 recites:

detecting an output from a particular one of said plurality of operating portions of said user-operated device, said particular one being operable to cause a character object to overcome at least one type of obstacle object on the screen;
and

in the event said character object encountered said at least one type of obstacle object on said screen, said at least one type of obstacle object is automatically overcome according to said output from said particular one of said plurality of operating portions.

Independent claim 6, to a processing system, and independent claim 7, to a program executing device, contain similar language as that listed above.

Applicants respectfully submit that the *Koizumi* reference fails to disclose or suggest the limitations of claims 1, 6, or 7. Indeed, the *Koizumi* reference fails to disclose or suggest that any automatic overcoming of obstacle objects are based on output from a user-operated device having a plurality of operating portions. The *Koizumi* reference states:

[0017] According to the present invention, it is possible to cause the player object to automatically affect a required action in accordance with an action code contained in land object image data and a state of the land object. If the action code is "jump", the player object automatically jumps. Thus, the player object can easily get over an obstacle such as a hole, hollow or wall surface.

Clearly, the *Koizumi* reference fails to disclose any specific manipulation of operating portions manipulated by a user to overcome an obstacle object. In contrast, in claims 1, 6, and 7 of the instant application an obstacle object may be automatically overcome in accordance with output from a user-operated device resulting from manipulating operating portions. Thus, the instant invention contemplates the operation (or activation) of a particular operating portion of the user-operated device to automatically take action to overcome the obstacle object. This makes it

possible for the user to easily cause the character object to overcome the obstacle object and to provide the foundation of an exciting and gratifying gaming experience, particularly because the character object executes action that the player intends.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that the *Koizumi* reference fails to disclose or suggest each and every feature recited in independent claims 1, 6, and 7. Further, claims 2-5 and 8-21 depend from independent claims 1, 6, and 7 and contain all of the limitations thereof as well as other limitations that are neither disclosed nor suggested by the prior art of record. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the § 102(e) rejections of claims 1-4 and 6-7 of the instant application.

In numbered parts 4 and 5 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claim 5 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the *Koizumi* reference. Applicants submit that claim 5 is patentable for the reasons discussed hereinabove with respect to independent claim 1. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the § 103(a) rejection of claim 5.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants submit that the instant claims are in condition for allowance. Early and favorable action is earnestly solicited. If, however, for any reason the Examiner does not believe that such action can be taken at this time, it is respectfully requested that he/she telephone Applicants' attorney at (908) 654-5000 in order to overcome any additional objections which may exist.

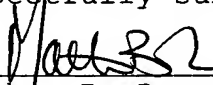
Application No.: 10/002,519

Docket No.: SCEI 3.0-100

If there are any additional charges in connection with this requested amendment, the Examiner is authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 12-1095 therefor.

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Respectfully submitted,

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